

WYCOMBE FIRST T' FOR HAMLET

PRE-SEASON news flooding from Champion Hill suggests Dulwich Hamlet are intent on restoring former glories.

Wycombe Wanderers offer an immediate test to the new-look South Londoners when they kick off the season at Loakes Park on Saturday, August 12.

Among Hamlet's reported captures are several Sutton United players, so they should provide a stiff opener for the Isthmian League champions.

Wanderers' second match will be at Woking — recently their favourite pitch — on Tuesday 15. The Blues have sparked on both their last two trips to the Surrey outfit, and look forward to a hat-trick.

WYCOMBE'S F.A. Cup first qualifying round opponents, Tooting and Mitcham, also apparently seem determined to banish the blues — in more ways than one.

Wanderers finance can ill afford a repeat of last season's quick-fire exit at Maidenhead. But the Blues visit Sandy Lane with the memory of a dramatic 2-1 extra time win at Tooting

summer scene BY MIKE WHITESMAN

in a second round Amateur Cup replay two seasons ago.

Victors travel to either Letchworth or Egham Town, and from there, if successful, journey again to Walton & Hersham, Met. Police, Leytonstone, Hounslow, or Staines.

Not a particularly attractive prospect for Wycombe, particularly with three away matches between them and the fourth qualifying round.

Meanwhile, there's just a chance, however slight, Marlow and Wycombe could share the same coach to Sandy Lane.

The Athenians are drawn away to the winners of Sutton's clash with Corinthian Casuals, who share Tooting's pitch.

Perhaps, Casuals are just keeping quiet about their plans to take Amateur soccer by storm next season.

Unlikely admittedly — but miracles have been known to happen.

After all, Sid Cann does have some rebuilding to do at Gander Green Lane.

JACK RICHARDSON, straight talking treasurer of Wanderers' Supporters' Club summed up the sentiments of many when he described the Premier Floodlight League set-up for the new season as "diabolical".

The competition's local impact has been lessened still further by the removal of Slough

Town and Maidenhead United to another Section. Their switch leaves Wycombe and Marlow in a group with Chesham, Wokingham, Banbury and Oxford City.

All, due respects to the clubs in question, but it is not an inspiring line-up, nor is it likely to attract either larger gates or more interest.

Losing the Rebels and the Magpies, means the four most attractive fixtures from last term's Section B have vanished in a stroke. The reduction to ten fixtures also cuts down the competition's usefulness as an arena for the Wycombe "backbench" to show its worth.

Still, at least Wycombe, Section winners twice in three seasons, look forward to an easier route to the play-offs, to be played on a knock-out basis between the five Section champions.

BEDFORD travel to Loakes Park for the third of Wycombe's pre-season friendly series on Tuesday, August 8. A trip to Waterlooville on Saturday July 29 and a home game against Altrincham on Saturday August 5, have already been fixed.

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The Southern Leaguers are best remembered by Bucks football fans for that epic four-match marathon in the 1966-67 F.A. Cup first round proper. Bedford eventually won the third replay 3-2, despite two Tony Horseman goals before a crowd of 8,105.

Not, however, before two 1-1 draws at Loakes Park and a 3-3 draw at Bedford. Approximately 32,000 paid to watch the four clashes.

SO that's how the situation stands at Loakes Park right now.

The squad returned to training at Bisham Abbey last Thursday night, minus Ted Powell of course. But we'll have to wait for the friendlies before judging whether or not the 1972-73 pool can rival last season's for strength.



Whether they are talking about the season gone by, the season to come, or just the beer, Wycombe Wanderers skipper John Delaney, treasurer Roger Lee and Larry Pritchard seem pretty happy with life. The trio were among the players, officials and invited guests who attended the Wanderers' close-season dinner dance last Thursday at the Windsor Lodge Hotel, Little Kingshill.